

WORKING DRAFT

Draft of January 14, 2015 – For Continuing Review

Region 5 (Central Indiana) Works Council 2015-16 Plan

(Boone, Hamilton, Hancock, Hendricks, Johnson, Madison, Marion, Morgan & Shelby Counties)

Purpose: Educated Citizens Driving a Strong and Rising Regional Economy

Basic Principle: Target Employment and Career Opportunities in the Region

1. Listen To Employer Sectors, To Meet Their Defined Needs and Opportunities
2. Stimulate and Support Providers, To Lift Educational Achievement At All Levels
3. Connect, Collaborate and Catalyze, To Build Capacity Across the Region

Initiatives: Support Interested and Committed Employers & Providers

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Next Steps: Collaboration, Landscape, Organization, Information, Resources, Action

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Purpose: Educated Citizens Driving a Strong and Rising Regional Economy

The Central Indiana Works Council aims at a **mid-to-high skill, high demand, high economic opportunity economy** for the region. It must be built in large part on **increasing the skills, knowledge and experience of the existing and future citizens of the region**. Here, we will call it **the SKE Economy**, and the employment and career opportunities we target we will call **SKE Opportunities**.

To that end the Region 5 Works Council seeks to build regional capacity and improve regional education and employment results. We aspire to an educated population for the region. We approach the challenges constructively and collaboratively. We intend to connect and work with interested and committed partners. We strive to drive available resources to our collaborators and the efforts they collaboratively undertake. We seek to build capacity in others and drive results for the citizens and employers we serve.

As our guiding principles we look to those specified by the Indiana Career Council –

- driven by **sector employer-defined needs**;
- focused on **student- and worker-centric delivery** of educational services;
- collaborating to **align educational delivery and government system efforts** to employer needs and student/worker realities; and
- pursuing with **prudent urgency** the objective of a regional citizenry with the skills, knowledge and experience to do the work of the current and future economy.

Given existing and developing sector and provider efforts, the Works Council will serve as connector and catalyst, to reinforce current and catalyze fresh capacity; to build collaborations that connect others doing good work; to support planning and resourcing of actions that achieve desired results and help take them to economies of scale. The Council will strive to avoid redundancy of organization and effort; to complement and not compete with initiatives or for resources; and to build distributed and sustainable capacity across the region.

Our two aligned and synergistic objectives are (1) to strengthen regional education to connect our citizens to employment opportunity and economic mobility and, as a result, (2) to strengthen the regional economy with competitively-educated citizens.

Basic Principle: Target Employment and Career Opportunities in the Region

1. **Listen To Employer Sectors, To Meet Their Defined Needs and Opportunities.** The efforts of the Works Council and those it supports and catalyzes will be aligned to the SKE Economy, aimed at those employment and career opportunities in the region that both meet the needs and opportunities in demand for the region's current and future employers and offer above average wages and career opportunities. In virtually all sectors that will include **SKE Opportunities, jobs requiring either “high” or “middle” skill, knowledge and experience that offer economic opportunity above the state's and nation's average salary and wage levels.** In simple terms, the Works Council will target careers that will lift Hoosier incomes by supporting employers whose career opportunities are in the higher end of the talent range, enabling a double gain: as regional residents move into higher skilled and higher compensated work, the jobs they leave can be filled by regional residents themselves moving up the education and earnings opportunity ladder. That general lift is problematic when the educational levels of the region trail those needed to fill the high end career opportunities, but a virtuous cycle ensues once educated talent moves up to them and others are educated to fill in behind.
2. **Stimulate and Support Providers, To Lift Educational Achievement At All Levels.** Opportunities require education. In pursuit of higher economic opportunities for citizens of the region, the Works Council will focus its efforts on strengthening the connections between employer-defined needs and provider-driven gains, at all levels (K-12; post-secondary pre-baccalaureate; baccalaureate and post-baccalaureate), among rising K-12 and post-secondary students, and among educationally unfinished and thus economically stranded adults. It is for the region's sectors to identify the opportunities and their educational requirements, for the region's providers to enable educational progress, and for the region's citizens to seek them to the level of their aspirations and abilities. The Works Council will seek to strengthen the region's results across the entire talent development value chain.
3. **Connect, Collaborate and Catalyze, To Build Capacity Across the Region.** The results of the Innovative Curriculum Grants process, combined with inputs on other developments (e.g., Anderson/Madison County's collaborative efforts in applied technologies), prove that local points of capacity can be catalytic in their own right in pursuit of improved opportunity. The Works Council will work with others to increase distributed capacity across the Central Indiana region so that sector-driven initiatives can intersect with deeper locally-driven capacity to increase individual education and preparedness for higher economic opportunity employment. The intended result is that external observers and investors will see not just isolated examples but an entire region focused on educating its citizens for the work and careers of the future.

Initiatives: Support Employers & Providers Pursuing SKE Opportunities

4. Support Interested and Committed SKE Employer Sectors in the Region:

4.1. Build on Existing Sector (and Sub-Sector) Work. Existing sector-based employer organizations in the region already have momentum in identifying talent needs and developing collaborations to help meet them. In some cases (e.g., BioCrossroads, Conexus) they have scalable models for educational pathways (e.g., Biomedical Technologists, AML certifications) that can be expanded in participants, scaled geographically across the region, used as models for similar work in other sectors and/or extended from their base to more precise sub-sector or even single employer programs. In other cases (e.g., Construction Trades) they have long-standing and self-sustaining programs with excess capacity needing only participants to re-build industry talent. In one case (Techpoint) the industry sector is a microcosm of the impacts on talent development caused by explosion in new technology that shifts and lifts the educational requirements under the industry's talent in ways that require entirely new approaches, forming a test bed for efforts that are central to that sector but may be equally applicable or even essential to other sectors experiencing rapid technological change. And two cases (AgriNovus Indiana and Energy Network Systems) provide examples of old industries (agriculture, power) that are self-organizing for reasons that include needed new approaches to talent development, attraction and retention, serving as real-time models for other sectors who may determine to pursue talent development. At the cores of these initiatives are self-interested efforts by employers themselves to organize to pursue defined educational objectives for the talent they need, providing the industry-specific, employer-defined, demand-driven targets for educational programs in the region. The Works Council will strive to support and assist these efforts.

4.2. Extend and Build Sector-Based Skill, Knowledge and Experience (SKE) Panels. Existing sector initiatives are at varying points of progress in defining the educational requirements for their talent needs, and virtually all sectors are chasing the accelerating changes in talent requirements driven by technology, innovation, connectivity and global forces. The Works Council can work to help organize and support a regional collaboration of the interested to define and pursue the educational levels of talent requirements in each sector – and collectively – that will meet the rising demand in SKE career opportunities. The Works Council would seek to catalyze a range of sector (or sub-sector) **SKE panels** to define and pursue regional talent requirements and provide operational leadership, guidance and action for the region's sector-based efforts. Nashville's skills panels and loose governance structure provide a possible model.

The SKE Panels would:

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Define Sector SKE Needs. The sector-based SKE Panels will identify needed SKE for each sector and, as desired, each sub-sector. These will scale from baseline needs identified by all sectors, to sector-based specific needs, to needs that may be unique to a sub-sector or even a few employers. As they desire, individual employers will always be free to pursue educational objectives and approaches unique to their circumstances, but the SKE Panels will provide collective leverage, scale and acceleration in meeting the sector employer demand-driven educational needs.

Pursue Sector SKE Results. Working directly with sector leadership and interested educational providers across K-12 and post-secondary education; in collaboration with lead organizations for regional employers such as the Indianapolis Chamber of Commerce (and other area Chambers) and the Central Indiana Corporate Partnership; and more generally as needed with the Indiana Commission for Higher Education and Department of Education; the SKE Panels can confirm, develop, expand and improve curricular pathways and experiential connections for regional students and workers by, for example,

- Identifying and evaluating current and emerging needs;
- Identifying, or creating, and recommending education and training solutions;
- Developing, innovating and/or confirming the focus, substance, rigor and expected results of education and training curricula;
- Creating a menu of experiential options for students and workers to add real-time experience, knowledge and progress to their academic curricular activities, whether in the classroom, at the sector employers, in internship or apprenticeship or other employment contexts, or otherwise;
- Ensuring that the means of provision of the educational opportunities is student- and worker-centric, aligning the educational pathways to the realities of the individuals without compromising the completeness, rigor and ultimate quality of the educational result;
- Collaborating with interested education providers, develop or improve and scale effective student-centric supports such as
 - career and educational guidance counseling for each student;
 - regional initiatives to drive awareness of sector career opportunities;
 - common means of confirming sector-specific educational results; and
 - ongoing evaluation of regional success in meeting sector talent needs;
- Managing the process of defining ongoing sector-based talent needs and delivered results, gaps and responses, useful adjustments to improve results, and attention to ensure efforts continue to target developing needs.

Align Sector SKE Needs and Results. The Works Council can help existing and interested sectors work with interested educational and civic governance structures to create an SKE network for the region with a supportive function to ensure that sector talent development processes; regional and related civic and economic development resources; and regional and related K-12, higher education and work force policies and

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efforts are all aligned. The Works Council can be a catalyst; the network should be self-managed by the participants.

Improve Overall SKE Results. The Works Council also can support efforts by the sectors to come together and build a knowledge and practice network in which progress can be accelerated for all.

5. Support Interested and Committed SKE Providers in the Region:

5.1. Support Committed Educational Providers As Active Partners. The region's educational providers and sector employers both are confronting the opportunities and challenges of change. The process is one to build aligned regional capacity in pursuit of improved regional results. It is done best if it is collaborative, among willing partners committed to common cause and common goals. To that end, and echoing existing approaches in and across the region, the Works Council will work with interested, willing and committed employers and educational providers to support their adjustments (including realignment of practices and reallocation of resources) to new realities and their common pursuit (including the freedom from regulatory constraint to do so) of the opportunities those realities provide.

5.2. Work with Interested and Committed Providers to Increase Their Capacity to Align to and Meet Sector Needs. As interested and committed providers seek to pursue educational results that are aligned to and effective for regional objectives, the Works Council will support their efforts to listen to, work with and deliver qualified students to the region's sectors and employers

5.3. Support Educational Provider Efforts to Adapt, Align and Succeed. As educational providers work to align their practices, resources and efforts to the educational results that enable the career opportunities for their students and the regional strengths strong sectors provide, the Works Council will seek to be a resource for them, in multiple ways. For example:

- Supporting their legitimate needs for freedom from regulatory constraints;
- Obtaining technical assistance and consultative support to inform their efforts;
- Providing regional initiatives that build general civic and community leader awareness of the alignment and value of provider efforts to the future of the individuals, families, neighborhoods, communities and employers of the region;
- Working with providers to confirm that existing and/or proposed curricular pathways, educational programs, and other educational initiatives align to and support both sector-specific requirements and regional objectives;
- Working with a vertical array of providers, develop a regional approach to improving career and academic guidance and counseling at all institutions, K-12 and post-secondary, utilizing SKE Panel substance, adopting technology as a tool

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for more continuous and effective information and establishing pilot approaches in available contexts to develop examples of effective counseling practice.

5.4. Support Consideration and Pursuit of Adjusted and New Models. Around the country there have been ongoing efforts to create new models for schools that are more responsive to the opportunities, challenges and changes in today's world. Some of them have addressed career opportunities and requirements in context, modifying Career and Technical curricula in existing schools; some have modified curricula and programs to add experiential content. And in some cases entirely new approaches have been created.

The Works Council will identify, examine and disseminate across the region both local and external models that may be of interest and value to the efforts of regional educational providers. Two external examples of what might be possible here:

- A suburb of Kansas City has developed a Center for Advanced Professional Studies that combines aspirational curricula with career center support. The strands evidence the aspirations: Bioscience (research, environmental science and animal health, molecular medicine, bioengineering), Engineering, Medicine and Healthcare, Human Services (law and education), Business, Technology and Media (global business, technology solutions, digital design, etc.), and an Accelerator (in global food industries). The Career Center (including counseling and mentoring) evidences connections to purpose and completion. The precise content and approach here may vary, but the model is an example of what the Works Council may offer interested collaborators help to develop.
- In South Carolina post-secondary institutions (in their case community college locations) have developed a wide range of apprenticeship opportunities to support industries seeking a more and more specifically talented workforce. The apprenticeships vary but share the common linkages directly between K-12 and immediate post-secondary programs and employment opportunities. They are modeled after German and similar programs, but are more market- and opportunity-based. They have provided employers across their region close to a 100-fold increase in apprenticeship participants.

And local examples:

- In Anderson and Madison County, a collaboration between the local K-12 schools, local post-secondary institutions (Anderson, Vincennes, Ivy Tech and Purdue), local employers and local economic development interests, facilitated by their county community foundation, is in process of developing a co-located set of educational curricula in the context of renovated space that will provide a functional space for education and training of students in curricular pathways that feed directly to local employer needs.
- Funded or not, the Innovative Curriculum Grants previously and currently submitted evidence the interest and commitment of local leaders – from, for

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example, the continuing expansion of Conexus' HireTechnology and A+ Partners programs across the region to Noblesville's MAC (manufacturing-automotive-construction) proposals to Blue River's collaboration to create an Advanced Manufacturing Pre-Apprenticeship/Apprenticeship Pathway in Shelby County to Marion County's developing Work 2020 initiative – and reveal the untapped potential for a rich regional tapestry

- In Marion County EmployIndy, in addition to providing training and similar services for employers, is developing both a more powerful technology-based system to connect the unemployed or under-employed with employment opportunities, working to build a market-based view of demand and supply for high skill opportunities, and supporting other similar efforts; and the Greater Indianapolis Progress Committee is building Work 2020, a multi-faceted plan that ranges from traditional efforts to a hard focus on the educationally stranded citizens of the county.

5.5. Seek to Expand Existing Regional Educational Initiatives. In addition to the sector-driven initiatives, there are many programs and initiatives whose replication directly (or in other programs that mirror their results) will accelerate general and specific educational objectives. The Works Council will collect, validate and support expansion of the work and results of successful efforts in the region. It will support expanded development of innovative sector-based curricula under the state's existing funding program. It will facilitate expansion of regional initiatives. And it will support region-wide availability of effective existing initiatives. All so that all students eventually have full access to them. By way of example only,

- Regional Initiatives
 - Awareness of Sector-Based Employment and Educational Opportunities (pivoting off the Construction Trades awareness initiative)
- K-12 Programming
 - Continued development of innovative K-12 curricula targeted at career pathways;
 - Project Lead the Way's K-12 STEM curricula;
 - Excel Center's programming to move non-high school graduates through a diploma into post-secondary education and to employment;
- Vertical Collaborations
 - between, for example, Vincennes or Ivy Tech, Purdue and employers to merge classwork, internship and employment in a vertical pathway that provides a qualifying high school graduate immediate employment and continued career-focused education;
- Other

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6. **Prioritize Immediate Opportunity and Need.** Among the range of circumstances within the region, some stand out as compelling because of the size and ubiquity of their opportunity and need, and others rise up because they have enduring difficulty resolving a focused need. The Works Council will work with others to take priority effort to address these circumstances.

6.1. Solve for Technology-Related Gains at All Levels. We are in “the second machine age.” Technology is driving inexorably through work, changing, mostly lifting, educational requirements. The normal value chain that our educational systems are modeled on is challenged by the disruptive effects of technology. From educational provider capacity to prerequisite educational foundations to functional flexibility to, for example, either program or manage or repair technologically-enabled processes and equipment, the region is facing a gap between educational delivery and employment need. The Works Council will work with others to develop a **Technology Education Task Force** to create regional strategies to address and implement, with prudent urgency, those educational foundations, delivery capacities and relevant pathways to meet employment opportunity today and build reliable depth for tomorrow.

6.2. Assist in Building Immediate Solutions for Identified Needs. From skilled welders in companies whose products and services support entire supply chains, to automotive technicians who now service and repair vehicles whose operations are dependent on an average of 20 to 30 computers each, and so on, there are persistent gaps between demand and supply of talent across the region. The Works Council will create an **Immediate Solutions Team** to assist the employers experiencing such shortages with analysis of the causes (for example, flat out lack of supply versus lack of efficient market matching mechanisms versus educational processes and content that are not aligned to new requirements, etc.) and strategic and action efforts to resolve the gaps.

7. **Work Toward Full Regional Participation.** The effort and results contemplated here extend across all citizens of Central Indiana. In a time of accelerating change, increasing complexity and intensifying requirements for work, we are all students who need to further our skills, knowledge and experience. There is benefit in recognizing that need and in recognizing and supporting the region as a place where all of our citizens – rising students to mature adults – are taking one or more step up educationally. The initiatives identified immediately below all evidence that “one step up” effort in the region. The Works Council will work with others to see whether, and if so how, it is useful to create a **One Step Up Campaign** that provides continuous reinforcement to all the efforts identified here and evidences to the world that Central Indiana is a region of rising educational achievement providing and creating a citizenry ready to do the SKE work of the present and future.

7.1. Educational Progress for Individuals In Their Place of Employment. Given the pace of changes in education, experience and capacity required of employees across the

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sectors, the Works Council will support existing and developing efforts to offer educational opportunities to the employees of regional employers. These will include, for example, working with Ivy Tech’s Corporate College to create opportunities for it to listen to the needs of regional employers and sectors and work with them to co-design curricula and pathways that meet the realities and limitations of current employees whose employers seek to have them upgrade their knowledge, skills and experience; and working with providers such as the University of Southern New Hampshire or others who offer technology-supported and competency- or mastery-based curricula enabling asynchronous learning designed specifically for targeted employer settings.

7.2. Efforts to Complete Post-Secondary Education. The Works Council will work to catalyze intensive support in the region for the Indiana Commission for Higher Education’s “Return to Complete” initiative and its goals of accelerated achievement by individuals who have some post-secondary education but for whatever reason have fallen short of completion, while working to ensure the completed course has the purpose of aligning to the individual’s career objectives.

7.3. Efforts to Enable Pursuit of Educational Opportunity and Economic Mobility. The region has many citizens whose education stopped short of what is now required to participate in the post-secondary education essential to pursuing SKE employment opportunities. The economic health of the region demands a hard and laser focus on the educational results that drive success. But the civic and moral health of the region demands an effort to ensure that all citizens have the education to get them over the bar and to the starting line of pursuit of improved economic opportunity. To that end, the Works Council will work with and support efforts by local community, educational and employer resources to help educationally stranded citizens, whether they have dropped out recently or their education in decades passed failed to provide them with the necessary learning foundations. Both the Excel Centers operated by Goodwill Industries and the Work Indiana program operated by local WIBS are examples of existing programs whose efforts can be improved, expanded and replicated to quicken the pace of bringing educationally stranded citizens to the door of educational programs that connect to employment opportunity. The WorkIndy portion of the Greater Indianapolis Progress Committee’s planning is in material part focused on furthering such efforts and others similar to them.

8. Create Regional Initiatives

8.1. Recognize and Support Local Initiatives in the Region. The work in Anderson and Madison County referenced above is but one example of similar efforts across the region. The Works Council will work with others to build a **Central Indiana SKE Network** to seek to identify, lift up, and support such local efforts across the region,

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including by creating a regional network of regional and local organizations and officials to

- highlight and celebrate local efforts and successes;
- share ideas, initiatives, results and conclusions;
- reinforce regional focus, commitment and capacity;
- provide information, trends, and ideas from national and international sources;
- gather, analyze, disseminate and stimulate consideration of regional information, trends, developments and results.

8.2. Establish a Regional Educational Baseline for SKE Employment Readiness. One of the realities of the existing and developing economy is that the baseline set of capacities an individual needs to enter, and for certain to thrive, in most of the work of the economy (certainly the SKE economy work but increasingly all of it) are higher than in prior times. The Works Council will make effort to work with others, including specifically the K-12 educators in the region, to gain collective understanding of and improve results for, these new educational baseline expectations. For example:

- The abilities to be a continuous learner; to think analytically, critically and creatively; to communicate; and others;
- A solid grounding in educational basics – reading and writing; mathematics;
- The floor preparation for, comfort in and motivation for learning and working in the various STEM disciplines;
- Simple work ethic.

The results will be the creation of a **Regional SKE Educational Baseline**.

Many K-12 providers already are working on these needs; the Works Council will work collaboratively to determine how best to build a region-wide (if locally-specified) approach to provide comfort that all our rising citizens will have the baseline capacity to persist through post-secondary education and achieve a purposeful entry into a desired career choice among with the skill, knowledge and experience to succeed.

8.3. Build A Regional Information Base To Support Decision and Action. In support of actions to increase regional capacity and improve regional results, and where appropriate in collaboration with other state and regional resources (DWD, INK, EmployIndy, etc.), the Works Council will help create a multi-institutional **Central Indiana Workforce Information Collaborative** for education and work force efforts in Central Indiana. The purpose of the collaborative will be to provide useful and actionable information about and for the region. For example,

- Demand data: sector-based employment trends, needs and gaps;
- Supply data: qualified regional supply and gaps;
- Action data: what efforts are being pursued across the Central Indiana region;
- Trend data: regional, national and local trends impacting current and future employment opportunities for the region;

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- Scorecard data: a regional scorecard of results to confirm progress, identify opportunities and issues, and provide self-imposed accountability;
- External data: Cross-regional, cross-sector and cross-pathway developments of use in building or replicating and scaling successful initiatives; and
- Basic data: the status of regional and local employment, education, civic and other relevant areas.

The Information Collaborative will also, for example, support general efforts such as economic development; and enable individual efforts to drive direct connection to opportunity such as connecting a prospective graduate to a regional employer hiring for a particular position and a regional employer to a prospective graduate who will be available.

8.4. Build Local and Regional Awareness. Using and scaling existing efforts (construction trades, Conexus) and supporting creation of others for the region's sectors, the Works Council will work with engaged partners to develop and implement **Coordinated Information and Awareness Campaigns**, to

- drive regional awareness and motivation at the individual (parent, student, educator, employer) level of the gains from pursuit of above average wage and career opportunities and the educational pathways that lead to them; and
- build common understanding, community common cause and purpose, positive spirit and collaborative intent among private sector, governmental, philanthropic and other resources.

Next Steps: Collaboration, Landscape, Organization, Information, Resources, Action

During 2015, the Works Council will identify and work with core collaborators to review the regional landscape and develop a three-tiered work plan:

- ❖ immediate actions with short-term and sustained benefit;
- ❖ actions that create capacity – organization, information, strategy, resources – that support targeted initiatives to drive ongoing results; and
- ❖ ongoing research and planning that build toward longer-term capacity for the full ecosystem to support a healthy, growing mid-to-high skills, high demand, higher economic opportunity economy in Central Indiana.